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guarding a pile of rotting old boards. Persistent inquiry developed the fact that, during a war many years before, a magazine had stood there, that when the other sentry-posts had been removed at the close of the war this one had been overlooked, and that ever since a sentry had stood there day and night. As soon as the necessary amount of red-tape could be unwound the sentinel was taken off. Perhaps, when nature discovers her oversight of so many ages ago, she may "take off" the belated sentinels that pace our beaches in such multitudes.

When this "clearing-up" time shall come, pray heaven she may remove some of the other Belated Crabs, not only from the physical world, but from society, government, and religion!

EDWARD P. JACKSON.

THE LEGAL PROFESSION DEFENDED.

"MAKE for me a perfect world and I'll supply the honest lawyer, but as it is now, query," is the burden of Mr. Greene's article, "Can Lawyers be Honest?" in the February NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW. This is a very pretty proposal; but so long as no one seems willing or able to come forward and provide the necessary perfection, it is a little difficult to see why the lawyer of the present day should be held responsible, as he seems to be by Mr. Greene, for all the moral lapses which are going on in the world of litigation. I have heard of a young lawyer who drew upon himself the laughter of his time by advertising that he proposed to practise law "upon Christian principles." He starved until he was rescued by a good-natured infidel. He, like Mr. Greene, ought to have begun by bringing the men and women who require the vigilant supervision of lawyers into living up to their "Christian principles," and not making the lawyer do all this for them.

The proposition which Mr. Greene advances has its serious side. He puts his claim to answer the question, "Can lawyers be honest?" upon the ground that the world is a very bad one, and that the lawyer contributes to this evil state of things by exercising evasions and tergiversations to protect his client, and justifies himself by claiming that success is necessary no matter at what cost of moral fibre. Mr. Greene takes care, when he raises the question of the integrity of the profession, to say that he speaks of reputable counsel associated with reputable clients. I venture the assertion that every reputable lawyer who has become informed of the daily current of affairs as they take place in his office in private, and are put forth to the world in courts, can fairly deny Mr. Greene's charges and cite his own experience as utterly opposed thereto.

No one denies that the natural inclination of the client is to justify himself, and sometimes largely at the expense of his adversary. He goes to counsel because he there expects experience and judgment in such affairs superior to his own. The skilful lawyer, seeing his client in the first agony of consultation, can measure him and his case, and in the confidence which exists between client and counsel the battle for the moral as well as the legal right is fought over and over again. No one outside knows it. No one appreciates how much moral courage and devotion to truth are displayed by counsel, sometimes at the cost of a fee, and sometimes at the cost of favor. This means at least two-thirds of every busy lawyer's life. But Mr. Greene objects because lawyers do not say, when urged to employ the statute of limitations, or the plea of minority, or technicalities in the defence of crim-

inals, or suppression of facts, etc., that all this is morally wrong, and therefore they will not justify it by their aid. Let me ask who created these laws that are so severely censured. Not the lawyer, surely, but the experience of man in the past centuries. Who adapts them to the public needs? Our courts, for whose integrity and ability we have the greatest respect.

These are principles of law which are as important to have carried out as a thousand other rules of life. They are hard upon the few, but to the great interest of the many.

Right here I claim that no question involving the limitation of debts or other legal questions which the requirements of society have created is raised by a client but that the "reputable lawyer" will inquire into the moral phase of the question, and the instances are numberless where the client, going to counsel to make this defence, is brought to look at it from the stand-point of honesty.

It ought not to be forgotten that most litigation is the result of honest doubt as to which party is in the right. The cases are rare where men go to law from pure "cussedness," but daily the questions tried are dubious and uncertain. In this department, where courts themselves differ, is it to be said that the lawyer upon the losing side is invariably wrong, in the sense of having known it in advance?

But Mr. Greene particularly objects because lawyers seek to win their causes by keeping their clients' secrets, by suppressing facts known to them and which they will not admit when in the wrong, but do all they can to make "the wrong the right appear." He apparently forgets that the lawyer is only a small fraction in the action and conduct of litigation. Cases are created before they reach him. He furnishes no aid to the suppression of the truth. But the world, in calling him, insists that the seal of confidence shall stamp every professional act. He lives in a real world. Civilization has made it what it is, but has not altogether driven out rapacity and selfishness. His office is like the clergyman's—to keep the confession which some sin-laden wretch lays before him. He is, in brief, like any man who, being intrusted with the secrets of others to keep, keeps them. He is not to make such confidence the means of wronging others, and does not if he is "reputable."

Whenever Utopia shall come, and every one employ his time in standing at the door of his hut descanting upon the virtues of his neighbor and his own infirmities, then the lawyer will be relieved of a large part of his duties; but not before.

It seems to me that Mr. Greene's error is in holding the legal profession to duties and obligations that will require it to reform all the world, and then become perfect itself.

Independent of these considerations, it is not to be forgotten that whenever integrity, ability, and courage are required, the lawyer is oftener selected than any one else. He it is who constitutes our judiciary, and through his character and conscience the law which is accepted and acted upon by the people is largely created. In all questions involving trusts, the protection of the life, property, and welfare of all classes and conditions, he is the instrument employed without apprehension that he will be unfaithful.

Do the public patronize lawyers who make success attainable by immoral methods? I agree that there is a flashy class of attorneys that attract the attention of clients whose credit is on a par with their counsel. But their methods are soon ascertained. They reach their level and remain. I

venture the assertion that there is no lawyer of any reputation in practice to-day whose success is not dependent upon the integrity of his life and his reputation for honesty on the lips of the people with whom he lives. While the world calls also for ability of the right type to do his work as it ought to be done, he finds his success in the moral qualities he displays rather than in anything else.

No one claims perfection in this profession. Reformation! Yes, let it come, but it will never be effected by men who charge upon lawyers timidity, selfishness, and dishonesty, and believe that they as a class are regarded, as claimed by Mr. Greene, with something more than suspicion. The world is not tolerant, as he insists, of anything that shows lack of integrity in this craft. Trusted as it is in everything, it cannot be mistrusted in anything without losing caste. And while a smart trick at the bar may be laughed at for the moment, its author has to reckon with that public opinion which sooner or later relegates him to the place where he belongs.

E. C. BUMPUS.

A REQUISITE OF REFORM.

Mephisto. "Ich bin der Geist der stets verneint."—GOETHE.

SIX years ago the Republican party selected as its Presidential candidate a man whom a part of the party declined to support. A secondary issue was their objection to the Republican doctrine of protection. Their revolt in New York, combined with other causes, was of sufficient strength to throw the vote of that State, and with it the Presidency, to Mr. Cleveland. In spite of the respect with which Mr. Cleveland's administration filled even his political enemies, the so-called independent movement of 1884 was extremely unfortunate in its deadening effect on a certain class of young men. The name independent has a fine sound, and it has ever since furnished a most convenient excuse on the part of men who ought to know better for the shirking of their political duties.

There are times when self-respect rises and ought to rise superior to loyalty to party, especially in the somewhat tangled condition of party lines to-day. "Measures, not men," was the disgrace of the party that coined the phrase, for there is and ought to be a point at which party orders fall on dull ears. In the State of Massachusetts and in the city of Boston there have been abundant examples in the last few years of nominations by both parties of men of such private life or public record, or both together, that independent thinkers among the party that nominated them slew them in the house of their friends. It is such independence within the party as this that insures the stability of the country and forms the sole hope of the men who fight the corruptionist at primaries, caucuses, polls, and lobbies, and who find the strongest ally of corruption in the apathy that calls itself independence. I might cite a Democratic caucus for a highly important purpose that was held last fall in the richest, if not the most intelligent, ward in Boston. Of fifty gentlemen of that party to whom two friends of mine personally appealed to come and aid them in a square fight between the young reformers and the old machine, but one solitary individual appeared.

The struggles of conscience endured on caucus nights by a man who has settled down at the club to a long drink and the French illustrated papers are painful to witness. He is not quite sure that he is a Republican, and cannot therefore attend the Republican caucus. He never has attended and does not propose to attend the Democratic caucus. He is an independent